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ABSTRACT

The principal plays a crucial role in determining the overall effectiveness of the school; therefore, attention must be focused not only on principal preparation, but also on principal recruitment and selection. Today a greater emphasis is being placed on managerial skills in principal selection, but personal characteristics still exert a heavy influence. A review of literature regarding principal characteristics indicated that, in effective schools, principals: (1) provide assertive, achievement-oriented leadership; (2) maintain an orderly, purposeful, and peaceful school climate; (3) have high expectations for staff and pupils; (4) have well-designed instructional objectives; and (5) utilize an evaluation system for the staff. Administrative recruitment should be aimed at developing a wide applicant pool that contains a substantial quantity of women and minorities--groups who traditionally have been underrepresented in administrative positions. A conceptual model is presented within this document to aid in the implementation of a recruitment and selection program. The assessment center is a step in the direction of predicting principal effectiveness, but the question still remains of whether the assessment center is the most effective and efficient way of selecting school leaders. The bibliography contains 293 references. (KM)

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THE SELECTION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: PROCESS AND PROMISE

Rodney J. Reed

May 1989

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Rodney J. Reed
27 April 1989

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Introduction

In 1983-84 there were 103,901 public elementary and secondary schools in the United States (Digest of Education Statistics, 1987). In California alone, there were 7,386 public schools of all types in 1986-87 (California Department of Education, 1988). Virtually all of the nation's public elementary and secondary schools are headed by principals, many of whom are nearing retirement age. More than one third of the nation's public school principals are 50 years of age and older, and 18% are 55 years of age and older (Feistritzer, 1988). In 1984, 19% of California's principals were 55 and over (Gerritz, Koppich and Guthrie, 1984). In both instances those percentages have presumably increased. Thus, both nationally and in California opportunities to recruit and select a significant number of school leaders will exist in the near future.

The crucial role of the principal in determining the overall effectiveness of the school is readily acknowledged (The School Principal, 1977; Reed, 1977; Edmonds, 1979; Clark, Lotto, and McCarthy, 1980; Olivero, 1980; Persell and Cookson, 1982). Yet because of the changing demography of the nation in general, and California in particular, with respect to the growing population of minority group students (Hodgkinson, 1985), principals will require an expanded set of skills and sensitivities. Therefore, attention needs to be focused not only on the preparation of principals as school leaders and administrators, but also on their recruitment and selection.

In recent years such attention has been given to the preparation of school administrators (Griffiths, 1979; Pitmer, 1982; Achilles, 1984; Peterson and Finn, 1985; National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, 1987). It is readily acknowledged that the principalship has become a much more complex and demanding position than it was in the past, requiring not only better methods for identification, recruitment, selection and placement, but also better preparation programs (Goodlad, 1983; Cornett, 1983; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983; Cunningham, 1985). Because a new generation of school leaders must be chosen to meet the challenge of changing demographic and educational circumstances, the processes by which principals are recruited and selected become more crucial than ever. If effective processes are not adopted, then better-prepared candidates are likely to be passed over, and the creative, competent leaders successful schools demand are likely not to be selected (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983; Goodlad, 1983).

Recruitment and selection of principals has been given scant attention in past literature. One of the earlier reports, written by Neagley (1953) for the Cooperative Program in Education Administration, Middle Atlantic Region (CPEA, MAR), focuses specifically on the recruitment and selection of school administrators. It begins with the following words:

> A casual survey of the literature in the field indicates that little, if anything, has been written on the subject of the recruitment and selection of school administrators. (p. 1)

It was more than a decade following Neagley's treatise before other substantive writings on the recruitment and selection of educational administrators appeared. Two publications of the University Council for Educational Administrators (UCEA), The Selective Recruitment of Education Leaders (1966) and The Selection of Educational Administrators (McIntyre, 1966), provided guidelines for the recruitment of principals. The first publication was concerned with meeting the "challenge to create and implement plans to ensure that educational organizations at all levels actually attract society's most able and talented leaders." (p.1) That publication articulates a series of positions designed to encourage educational institutions and educational leaders to meet the above challenge. Its major emphasis is recruitment of potential leaders into the educational profession. In the second publication, McIntyre (1966) articulates the commonsensical position that in order to have effective educational administrators we must ensure that the best candidates are attracted to educational administration and selected for entry into administrator preparation programs. In the following year, 1967, the American Association of School Administrators published a pamphlet entitled The Right Principal for the Right School. This publication is the first one to focus primarily on the selection of principals.

A variety of articles and recommendations for principal selection procedures appeared between 1960 and 1980. Many of these were conjectural in nature, although some were based on the reports of survey research. Baltzell and Dentler's 1983 principal selection study, Selecting American School Principals: A Source Book for Educators, represented quite well the latter category. Their study of principal selection practices used a randomly selected sample of diverse school districts of 10,000 or more in size, and five purposely selected districts which had promising principal selection procedures. Baltzell and Dentler provide data on how principals were actually selected, and based on an analysis of those data, suggest principal selection procedures within a conceptual framework that addresses aims of school district policies, merit, sex and racial equity, legitimacy, and efficiency.

A review of the literature primarily focused on the recruitment and selection of principals reveals the existence of a rather limited amount of empirical evidence, but a somewhat larger body of work that can be classified as descriptive and general opinion. It is the case, however, that general and managerial personnel selection and recruitment procedures in public and private sectors provide a source of information that can be instructive to the process of recruiting and selecting school leaders. It is the purpose of this treatise to focus on recruitment and selection of principals by first examining general recruitment and selection concepts and procedures in the public and private sector and second by formulating a conceptual model that can be used to assist school districts in more effectively recruiting and selecting principals for their schools who will be responsive to current and future school challenges and complexities.

This treatise is organized into two major sections. Part I focuses on the literature regarding the recruitment and selection of principals. It first examines the characteristics of effective principals and the specific techniques used for principal recruitment and selection. Part II describes a conceptual model to guide recruitment and selection procedures for school principals. A brief postlude concludes this study.

PART I

Recruitment and Selection of School Principals

Much has been written regarding the pivotal role of the school principal as educational leader and his or her effect upon school climate, student achievement, teacher morale, community support, and parent involvement (Edmonds, 1979; Brookover et al., 1979; Persell and Cookson, 1982; Sweeney, 1982; Lightfoot, 1983; Clark, Lotto, and Astuto, 1984). Although we have a good notion of what we want a principal to accomplish, before we can move on to the issue of how to select a person who will be an effective principal we need to ask the question, "What characteristics must a principal possess in order to be effective?"

While authors have enumerated many characteristics that have or should have played a part in the selection process, there is no consensus as to what constitutes a perfect principal. Perhaps this is because each school has its individual needs, and different leadership styles are effective in different situations (Fiedler, Chemers, and Mahar, 1976; Olivero, 1980; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982; United States Department of Education, 1987). Nevertheless, it is valuable to review what has been said about desirable characteristics for principals in general before we turn to the matter of tailoring these to the needs of a particular school.

Desired Characteristics of Principals

The characteristics discussed in the literature have been divided into four main groups: 1) those that are required for eligibility to enter competitions for principalships, 2) readily identifiable traits, 3) qualities relating to the disposition of candidates, and 4) managerial skills.

Eligibility

The requirements to be considered for a principalship tend to be minimal, with few authors recommending more stringent standards. An example of eligibility requirements are those reported by Sharpe (1976) in a comparative study of high school principal selection in the United States and Australia. In Australia, according to Sharpe, potential principal candidates first must hold a B.A. degree (or its equivalent) and a teacher's certificate, and must have completed five years of teaching. By contrast, in the United States eligibility is typically satisfied by earning a B.A. or B.S. degree, completing three to five years of successful classroom teaching, and obtaining an administrator's credential for the specific state in which appointment is to be made. Additionally, some states require passage of an administratrive or competency examination. Local school districts also may require participation in an internship program or successful completion of assessment center measures.

According to Baltzell and Dentler (1983), some states also require a master's degree in educational administration which includes a field internship or practicum, or coursework in areas such as bilingual education and special education. Although Pokorny (1986) found that 99% of recently hired principals hold a master's degree and recommends that candidates obtain an administrator certification (which is required in most states), authors tended not to recommend making advanced degrees and certifications mandatory. Even the Pennsylvania State Department of Education (1971), which recommends that principals have an administrative credential and be committed to obtaining a doctorate, indicates that these qualifications should be considered in the first part of a two-tiered set of criteria for selecting principals and does not recommend them as a requirement for eligibility.

The American Association of School Administrators' publication, The Right Principal for the Right School (1967), makes the following recommendations on principal eligibility:

1. No person be excluded from consideration as principal on the basis of sex alone.

2. Unusually long periods of teaching experience not be required.

3. A year of graduate study, or its equivalent, at a duly accredited institution of higher learning be the absolute minimum for consideration for selection as a principal, with post-master's work in school administration, particularly a doctorate, being given a high order of preference.

4. No person be excluded from, nor be given special consideration in, recruitment and selection because of race, religion, socioeconomic status, nationality background, or political influence.

Traits

Traits are characteristics which, at the time of application, are immutable: either the candidate possesses them or not. These include both physical characteristics as well as educational and work experience. Although thought to be old-fashioned, several surveys of selection decisions indicate that physical characteristics continue to be important factors in the selection process. Experience is also widely mentioned as key to selection decisions.

From data collected through structured interviews of public school, elementary, secondary, and unified district superintendents in the San Francisco Bay Area, Briner (1960) found a high degree of statistical agreement that physical and character image (neat, 30 to 40 years old, good health, family man, outgoing), formal education (broad liberal arts undergraduate education, extensive exposure to sociological, psychological, biological, and philosophical foundations of education) and field and professional experience (minimum of two years teaching experience, public service work experience prior to teaching, membership in professional and civic organizations) were among what was considered to be ideal selection criteria.

From their more recent survey of a nationwide sample of public school superintendents Bryant et al. (1978) conclude that there is considerable agreement among superintendents that it is important for principal candidates to have a good personal appearance and previous administrative experience. Baltzell and Dentler (1983) also found that "personal presence" played a role in superintendents' notions of what characteristics constitute a good principal. Other physical traits such as good health have been cited as important by Schilson (1965) and Newberry (1977). Experience was emphasized more by some authors, such as Teitelbaum and Lee (1972), who report that knowledge of the administrative process and breadth of general education are some of the most important criteria superintendents use. Cornett (1983) also mentions previous administrative experience as one of the characteristics superintendents seriously consider.

Personal Qualities

Characteristics which are related to the personality of the candidate are viewed as personal qualities. Unlike the eligibility characteristics or traits, it is difficult to determine whether candidates possess desired qualities. Nevertheless, Wagstaff and Spillman (1974) argue that personality characteristics should not be abandoned in selecting principals. They assert that individuals in leadership positions exceed their average subordinates in such characteristics as intelligence, scholarship, and dependability. The following represents a partial set of attributes that they believe elementary school principals should possess:

1. commitment to the elementary school principalship,
2. self-confidence,
3. penchant for ambiguity and uncertainty,
4. insight into the interrelatedness of the school to itself and its environment,
5. empathy with those who follow.

In a similar manner, Neagley (1953), one of the first to write specifically on the recruitment and selection of school administrators, and the AASA sponsored report, The Right Principal for the Right School (1967), recommend that personal variables, such as intelligence, personality, value patterns, age, sex, and marital status, be considered in selecting principals. (The last three variables are of course now illegal to require on an application form according to federal guidelines. See, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, 1978.) In addition, Poteet's survey of Texas superintendents (1968) revealed that the 10 most frequently mentioned characteristics that they desired in principals were honesty, loyalty, cooperativeness, self-control, ability to work with parents, ability to communicate, personal enthusiasm, competency of judgment, initiative, and patience.

Qualities such as intelligence (Neagley, 1953; Schilson, 1965; The Right Principal for the Right School, 1967; McIntyre, 1974; Wagstaff and

Spillman, 1974; Newberry, 1977), flexibility and cooperation (Poteet, 1968; Pennsylvania, 1971; Teitelbaum and Lee, 1972; Cornett, 1983; United States Department of Education, 1987) and creativity and innovation (Schilson, 1965; Pennsylvania, 1971; Teitelbaum and Lee, 1972; UCEA, 1966; CSA, 1978; United States Department of Education, 1987) were frequently mentioned. Humanism (Bryant, 1978), integrity, personal character, and dedication (Teitelbaum and Lee, 1972) are some additional qualities superintendents agree are important.

Certain qualities pertain more to the attitudes that candidates hold rather than their personality per se. Briner (1960), for example, states that San Francisco Bay Area superintendents look at the educational goals and social philosophy of their candidates to make sure that they can verbalize the need for public education and are dedicated to a career in education. Schilson (1965) believes principals should be able to express a philosophy of education upholding American democratic principals. Baltzell and Dentler (1983) report that a good principal is perceived to be the "embodiment of community values." The Right Principal for the Right School (1967) recommends the selection of a principal who has an understanding of the school's community, and Morris et al. (1984) hold that a candidate should be able to answer to the school and community and identify with the whole school.

Managerial Skills

A principal, while remaining an educational leader, functions as a manager of a school. Therefore, it is not surprising that the importance of managerial skills for principal candidates is increasingly emphasized. To some authors, command of these skills appears to be the sole criterion for selection. Sharpe's (1976) study reveals that criteria used in Australia included professional skills, managerial ability, leadership and supervision effectiveness, and use of physical and human resources within his or her sphere of responsibility. Additional criteria used in the selection process were also primarily managerially oriented: organizational and time management skills; school management skills with regard to pupils, staff, and premises; community relations; service background; and professional and personal qualities. Likewise Roesch (1986) concluded from a survey of California superintendents that the important principal selection criteria are managerial skills.

Communication and interpersonal skills were frequently cited by authors as being chief qualifications (Neagley, 1953; Briner, 1960; Lipham, 1960; Poteet, 1968; PSDE, 1971; Teitelbaum and Lee, 1972; Wagstaff and Spillman, 1974; McIntyre, 1974; Newberry, 1977; Bullen, 1983; Cornett, 1983; Roesch, 1986; United States Department of Education, 1987), along with decision making (PSDE, 1971; Newberry, 1977; Roesch, 1986), and community relations (Teitelbaum and Lee, 1972; Sharpe, 1976; Morris et al., 1984; Roesch, 1986; United States Department of Education, 1987).

In the past decade several researchers found that to be effective, principals should ensure that goals are clearly stated and achieved, emphasize student achievement, create high expectations and motivate teachers and students to meet those expectations (Weber, 1971; Brookover, 1976; Carlson, 1977; Brookover and Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Olivero, 1980; Shoemaker and Fraser, 1981; Persell and Cookson, 1982; Sweeney, 1982; Yukl, 1982; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1982; United States Department of Education, 1987). In summarizing this literature, researchers Shoemaker and Fraser (1981) found that in effective schools, principals 1) provide assertive, achievement-oriented leadership; 2) maintain an orderly, purposeful, and peaceful school climate; 3) have high expectations for staff and pupils; and 4) have well-designed instructional objectives and an evaluation system. Persell and Cookson (1982) identified nine recurrent behaviors of the successful principal in their survey of research studies:

1. demonstrating a commitment to academic goals,
2. creating a climate of high expectations,
3. functioning as an instructional leader,
4. being a forceful and dynamic leader,
5. consulting effectively with others,
6. creating order and discipline,
7. marshalling resources,
8. using time well,
9. evaluating results.

Similar characteristics of principal behavior in effective schools emerge from a selected review of literature by Sweeney (1982), who identifies six behaviors that are consistently associated with well-managed schools in which students achieve. Accordingly, in these schools, principals

1. emphasize achievement,
2. set instructional priorities,
3. provide an orderly atmosphere,
4. frequently evaluate student progress,
5. coordinate instructional programs,
6. support teachers.

Yukl (1982) posits that the following characteristics associated with managerial effectiveness should also be beneficial for school principals: self-confidence; need for socialized power; need for achievement; desire to compete with peers; respect for authority figures; tolerance for high stress; high energy level; interest in oral, persuasive activities; and relevant technical, conceptual, and interpersonal skills.

Morris et al. (1984) conclude from their study of elementary principals that principal selection should be based on how well a candidate can perform responsibilities such as the following:

1. Organize disparate elements--people, equipment, money--into a self-sustaining enterprise.
2. Coordinate individuals in an intricate division of labor, each person performing a specialized task.
3 Motivate highly skilled individuals, some of them prima donnas.
4. Take care of wounded egos and serve as counselor and parent figure to troubled subordinates.
5. Maintain frequent, easy-going contact with the public.
6. Keep a cool head under provocative and stressful circumstances.
7. Answer to the school and community.
8. Identify with the whole school. (pp. 241-242)

Additionally, individuals selected for the principalship should be skilled in face-to-face communication, have agility in ad hoc, situation-specific decision making, and be capable of adapting to the role of the contemporary principal. (p. 243)

In Cunningham's view (1985), leaders for 1985 and beyond will focus on the present and the future simultaneously; bridge the gap between different interest groups; scan, monitor, and interpret events; appraise skills;

be intuitive; manage symbols; and be a teacher. Cunningham (1985) argues further that the prerequisites for school leaders of the future are the desire to lead, a healthy attitude toward children and their needs as well as toward society and its needs, and an understanding of the function of individual and institutional goals and objectives.

Rutherford (1985) holds that the effective principal manifests the following effective leadership characteristics: has clear vision, translates vision into school goals; establishes a supportive climate; monitors teachers; and intervenes in supportive, yet corrective ways.

Conclusions

The literature reveals that in selecting principals, personality traits are gradually being replaced by managerial skills on authors' lists of desired characteristics. Many of the demographic factors that were once given prominence are no longer considered acceptable. It would be unwarranted, however, to conclude that the selection process is not still heavily influenced by personal characteristics. For example, Batchelor et al. (1987) investigated which characteristics resulted in high ratings by having four hypothetical resumes of potential principals evaluated by a national sample of superintendents. They found that outside interests and skills were most related to the evaluators' overall assessment of the candidate, followed, in order, by professional involvement, appearance, professional experience, academic background, references, and personal background. While evaluators may be unwilling to admit that they base their selections on factors generally considered unacceptable, they appear to allow personal characteristics to sway their assessment.

In some instances, as judged by supervisors and staff, selection criteria have been found to be unimportant to success as a school administrator (Bridges and Baehr, 1971; Newberry, 1977). More specifically, these factors were found irrelevant to effectiveness as an educational administrator: number of years spent in college (Hemphill, Griffiths, and Frederiksen, 1962); number of years of graduate study (Lipham, 1960); number of undergraduate education hours taken (Schultz, 1966); and number of graduate education hours taken (Gross and Herriott, 1965). Other selection criteria unrelated to effectiveness included marital status and sex (The Right Principal for the Right School, 1967), overemphasis on length of teaching experience, that is, more than five years (Sarason, 1971), and length of administrative experience (Newberry, 1977). Although some school districts continue to include such criteria in selecting principals, other criteria have been advocated as being more appropriate and more relevant to success or effectiveness as a school administrator.

The Process of Recruitment and Selection

The list of characteristics which are generally considered desirable for school leaders to possess is a useful guideline for schools in choosing principals. But a school faced with a vacancy must also develop a recruitment and selection process that will succeed in obtaining the appropriate person for the opening. The process, as advocated by Baltzell and Dentler (1983), must address the issues of merit, equity, legitimacy, and efficiency . The concept of merit is concerned with matching the right person with the right position. Employee characteristics as well as educational and experiential background may be used in this determination of fit . The danger here is in having a selection procedure that appears to ensure objectivity but, in fact, only masks subjectivity.

The presence of equity is somewhat easier to determine since it is concerned with the extent to which various groups are proportionally represented in leadership positions and the extent to which affirmative action goals are being met. Legitimacy pertains to the acceptance by others of the correctness and fairness of a given appointment. The question asked in this regard is whether or not the process was fair and open.

Efficiency refers to the relationship between effort and outcome. The most efficient operation expends the least amount of time and effort, costs the least, and has the least disruptive effect on the daily organizational operation in the accomplishment of a goal. The satisfaction of efficiency often works against merit, equity, and legitimacy, since they are more costly and disruptive to achieve than is maintaining the current operating system.

Consideration of merit, equity, legitimacy, and efficiency was useful as a conceptual framework for the study of the selection of principals conducted by Baltzell and Dentler (1983). These dimensions will be implicit in the following discussion of selection and recruitment techniques, which includes those involved in the process and forecasting and defining needs.

Those Involved in the Process

The first step to any recruitment and selection process is to assign responsibility for each phase. Most authors indicate that the school board and the superintendent are the key actors. While the role of the board and superintendent tends to dominate the process, others, such as parents, teachers, and other constituents, may also play a role.

The AASA sponsored report, The Right Principal for the Right School (1967), recommends that the school board be involved from the first step of the process by setting policy to guide the superintendent or his or her designated representative. The California State Assembly Education Committee Task Force for the Improvement of Pre- and In-Service Training (1977) concurs in its report which recommends that written recruitment and selection policies first be established by school boards. These policies should mandate open and broad-based searches and reflect community needs (The School Principal, 1977). Derived from and based on their study of principal selection procedures, Baltzell and Dentler (1983) aver that the selection process should be guided by the school board and superintendent's determination of the aims of the district and by the assignment of weights to the most and least important elements. In Steller's view (1984), school boards and superintendents should determine how candidates will be identified and assisted in honing basic administrative skills. Newberry (1977) posits that school boards and superintendents should sharply define criteria for the selection of elementary school principals and develop strategies to assess these criteria.

Although the final appointment resides with the superintendent and school board, it is important to use a diverse set of screeners in the selection process. Lund (1977) suggests that the superintendent and principal constituent groups should be the ones to establish principal selection criteria but that qualified candidates should then be screened by an internal committee. Often a committee of individuals representative of the school-community affected by the hiring decision conducts interviews of candidates who successfully complete the initial paper screening. The committee may vary in size from a few individuals to as many as 13 to 20 members (Meese, 1981; Pokorny, 1985). A final interview before the hiring decision is made may be conducted by the superintendent (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

A 1986 study by Gips and Bredeson indicates that though they are infrequently involved in the selection process, teachers feel they would offer a unique and valuable perspective to administrators making hiring decisions. Fiander (1986) reports that in one New Jersey School district, the selection screening/advisory committee routinely consists of a school board member, a parent, and a teacher from the school involved in addition to another administrator.

Forecasting and Defining Needs

Forecasting needs involves analyzing future organizational work force requirements, with respect to both the quantity and timing of principal vacancies. Defining needs requires the identification of an individual school's specific strengths and weaknesses. Forecasting needs can be based on pupil enrollment projections and anticipated principal separations, (i.e., retirements, resignations, leaves, reassignments, promotions, demotions, and deaths). Whereas many school districts have yet to develop strong planning and forecasting capabilities, the need for strengthening forecasting is becoming more widely recognized (Van Zwoll, 1964; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983; Guthrie and Reed, 1986; Castetter, 1986). Even in the private sector many firms, while acknowledging the wisdom of forecasting, do not have well`thought-out recruitment systems based upon a thorough analysis of present and future needs (Carnazza, 1982).

Methods used for projecting student enrollments, which then become the basis for projecting teacher and administrative needs, include average change projections, regression, and cohort survival projections (Lewis, 1983;

Garms, 1988). In addition to projecting student enrollments, careful attention must be given to programmatic changes, principal turnover rates, and changing community and student needs.

Defining needs ensures that principals are matched to the situation in which they are expected to function (Erickson, 1963; The Right Principal for the Right School, 1967; Morris et al., 1984). Although a generalized list of characteristics associated with principal selection, as developed in Table 1, can often have a high degree of validity for general recruitment and selection purposes, it is infinitely more desirable to specify desired abilities, skills, and knowledge within the context of the particular position for which selection is to be implemented.

Before initiating the recruitment process the AASA (1968) suggests that school boards know the following about themselves: their education aspirations and those of the people they represent, the philosophy of the school system, and the scope and content of the educational program. Then a job analysis can be undertaken. Job analysis is a systematic procedure for gathering, documenting, and analyzing information about job content, requirements, and performance context (Bemis, Belenky, and Soder, 1983). It is invaluable in identifying facets thought to account for superior or effective performance. Several methods may be employed in this regard; six are briefly described here.

First, the Department of Labor Method (DOL) is a description of work performed and worker traits within a contextual framework. The DOL method was initially used to prepare job information for inclusion in the 1965 Dictionary of Occupational Titles. A second technique is the Functional Job Analysis (FJA) which includes the following components: identification of purpose, goals, and objective; description of tasks; analysis of tasks;

TABLE 1

FACTORS USED IN PRINCIPAL SELECTION AND SOME RELATED MEASURING DEVICES

	Factors Used in Selection	Devices Used in Measurement
1.	Age, experience, family history	Biographical information, blank interview
2.	Breadth of general knowledge	Achievement tests, transcript, ratings by competent observers, interview, letters of recommendation
3.	Breadth of specialized knowledge of education.	Achievement tests, transcript ratings by competent observers, interview, letters of recommendation
4.	Command of the English language and ability to articulate thoughts	Tests, interview, ratings by competent observers
5.	Dependability, drive	Ratings by competent observers
6.	Emotional stability and other characteristics of personality	Tests, rating by competent observers, letters of recommendation, interview
7.	Human relations skills	Ratings by or conversations with competent observers, letters of recommendation, interview
8.	Interests	Interview
9.	Likely administrative behavior or creativity	Situational performance tests, interview, letters of recommendation
10.	Mental ability or intelligence	Intelligence tests
11.	Moral fitness	Ratings by or conversation with competent observers, letters of recommendation
12.	Scholarship	Transcript, letters of recommendation
13.	Value patterns	Tests of value, ratings by or conversions with competent observers, interview.
14.	Physical fitness or health	Health examination

Source: The Right Principal for the Right School. Washington, D.C.: American Association of School Administrators.

development of performance standards; and development of training content (Fine, 1974; Fine, Holt, and Hutchinson, 1974). A third job analysis device is the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954). This device basically involves 1) collecting through interviews, questionnaires, and observations information regarding effective and ineffective behavior as related to job goals, and 2) classifying critical incidents into behavioral domains.

Fourth, the Job Element Method (Prinoff, 1971) provides a system for identifying, rating, and analyzing the following job elements: knowledge, skill, willingness, interest, and personal characteristics. Although generally associated with job evaluation and compensation programs, a fifth technique, the Position Analysis Questionnaire (PAQ), can also be used in employee selection and job design. The PAQ provides a useful way to describe worker oriented aspects of job performance and is organized into six categories: information input, mental processes, work output, relationship with other persons, job context, and other job characteristics (McCormick, Jeanneret, and Mecham, 1969, 1972).

The sixth job analysis method is the Behavioral Consistency Method (Schmidt et al., 1979) through which a tailored application blank focusing on past achievements is designed. This method identifies areas of competence to be used in the selection of experienced mid-level governmental, professional, and managerial personnel and for private sector managerial and blue collar jobs. The method involves identifying and describing job activities and tasks, identifying knowledge, abilities, skills and other characteristics required for superior and adequate job performance, evaluating knowledge, abilities, skills, and other characteristics through the use of subject-matter experts, and analyzing subject-matter expert ratings and the rank ordering of job performance knowledge, abilities, skills, and other characteristics.

So far attempts at job analysis by school districts have tended to be informal. Coburn (1985), who as a member of a school board served on a search committee, describes how his committee spent a great deal of time listening to as many of the school's constituencies as possible discuss their perceptions of the school's identity and direction. Fiander (1986), a superintendent who chairs his district's screening/advisory committee, surveys the school board, parents, school staff members, and, if the principalship is at a high school, the students, to find out what kind of person they think is needed for the job. An early publication of the AASA (1949) on superintendent selection, however, warns that seeking advice from local professional organizations and lay groups might result in the new superintendent being beholden to special interests of groups. Standardizing the selection process may lessen the danger of politicization, however.

One major difficulty, often a symptom of undefined needs, which is encountered when attempting to fill principalships, is that position descriptions are seldom clear. Baltzell and Dentler (1983) found that most school districts tend not to possess a clear written statement on the specific facets of educational leadership desired. Successful recruitment depends on ensuring that a clear job description exists for the position for which applicants are sought (Neagley, 1953; The Right Principal for the Right School, 1968).

The position description can be developed by the personnel office in consultation with district and school site staff, and approved by the superintendent and school board. It should include minimum individual qualifications, position duties, responsibilities, and reporting lines; descriptions of the school district and the particular work setting or school and its community; role expectations and accountability requirements; school and district goals and objectives; beginning date of employment; salary; procedures and deadlines for applying for the position; and the dates when hiring decisions will be announced (The Right Principal for the Right School, 1967; Guthrie and Reed, 1986; Castetter, 1986).

Recruitment

The intent of the recruitment process is to generate a significant pool of applicants who possess the qualifications and characteristics desired for a given position. To ensure that there is a large and viable applicant pool, several authors recommend that recruitment must be an open process rather than a closed one in which candidates are preselected and the process is implemented only for symbolic, legal, or contractual reasons (CSA, 1978; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

The first step in the recruitment process is to bring the fact that there is a vacancy to the attention of appropriate candidates. Whereas Baltzell and Dentler (1983) contend that posting vacancy notices of specific principalships is no longer a feasible practice for large districts, other authors felt this was an important first step to ensuring the integrity of the selection process (AASA, 1949; AASA, 1968; CSA, 1978; United States Department of Education, 1987). Landers (1981) reports that in West Germany, the opening for a principalship is first publicly announced so that interested teachers and vice principals can submit their credentials. Lund (1977) asserts that positions to be filled should be widely posted in order to inform interested individuals who may be outside traditional communications and group newtorks.

Recruitmment from Outside

An important policy decision to be made by the school board with the involvement of the superintendent is whether recruitment will be from inside the school district, from outside, or from both sources. Policies for either of these recruitment options can be found in the many school districts of this nation.

When it is deemed desirable or necessary to recruit from outside an organization, several methods can be utilized. Among these are employee referrals, advertising, employment agencies and consulting firms, college recruitment, and civil service-like lists (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Lopresto, 1972; Sharpe, 1976; Shapero, 1985; Beach, 1985; Turner, 1987).

Recommendations of candidates by associates and friends within a district network can also be a valuable source of applicants. Sometimes referred to as informal recruiting, referral by friends, former associates, and the like can be encouraged through the use of internal communication, bulletin boards, employee newspapers, special circulars, orientation sessions for new employees, incentive programs, and so forth (Lopresto, 1972).

There is some evidence from the private sector to support the view that employee referral is a more effective source of long-term employees than recruitment through media announcements, other more formal sources, or walk-ins (Gannon, 1971; Reid, 1972; Decker and Cornelius, 1979; Schwab, 1982). Moreover, in a study of store clerk employment, Caldwell and Spivey (1983) found that for white candidates, informal employee referral was a better source of long tenure employees than media announcements. For African-American employees, however, employment agencies (a formal source) were best for long-term employment (Caldwell and Spivey, 1983).

Wanous (1980) holds that differences in employee longevity result from the kind of job information applicants receive from various recruitment sources. Employee referrals seem to provide more realistic job information than do formal sources. Thus, turnover is reduced because employees select positions for which they feel qualified (Reilly, Tenopyr, and Sperling, 1979; Wanous, 1980). They also experience increased job satisfaction because of more realistic expectations (Wanous, 1973, 1980), have high levels of organization commitment, and cope better with unpleasant job demands (Reilly, Tenopyr, and Sperling, 1979).

By contrast, Breaugh (1981) found no significant differences among individuals recruited from four recruitment sources with respect to age, education, sex, years with the company, years in current position, and years under present supervisor. In addition, Taylor and Schmidt (1983) conclude from their investigation of studies on effectiveness of recruitment sources that, whereas recruitment sources differ significantly in terms of employee tenure and attendance, employee referrals did not appear to be one of the more effective recruitment sources. Rather, individuals who had formerly worked for the company (rehires) tended to earn higher performance ratings, have better attendance records, and achieve longer job tenure than employees recruited from other sources (Taylor and Schmidt, 1983). The danger of perpetuating an "old boy's network" exists when using employee referral. If, however, individuals within informal groups are committed to excellence and recruitment of strong leaders, the process can be well served.

A commonly used method for generating principal applicants is to place advertisements in professional publications and newspapers (Castetter, 1986). Where a school advertises determines, to some extent, the number and quality of responses that it will receive. For example, in the private sector advertising in trade journals appropriate to the position for which recruitment is initiated will generally lead to fewer, more qualified replies than advertising in newspapers (Stone and Kendall, 1956). The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1987) suggests advertising in principal and superintendent newsletters, in education journals, and in the publications or at the conferences of professional associations such as the National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of Independent Schools, or National Catholic Educational Association.

Effective advertisements are those that are consciously geared to desired clientele. In general, however, ads are reported as one of the least effective ways of recruiting and, often, as poorly designed to reach candidates the organization would find desirable (Sands, 1963). There is the additional possibility that open advertising can generate too many replies, many from poorly qualified candidates (Sands, 1963).

Developing an ongoing registry of qualified individuals, maintained by the school district personnel office and professional teacher and administrator organizations, who can be invited to apply for vacancies as they arise is another applicant source (United States Department of Education, 1987). So, too, are job search services at professional conventions, in college career placement offices, through appropriate college and university professors (e.g., professors of Educational Administration), and recruiting firms (Harris et al., 1985; Siegel and Myrtle, 1985; Castetter, 1986; Guthrie and Reed, 1986). Candidates may also be recruited from school district internship programs which are discussed later (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

Recruitment from Within

School districts often look for principal candidates within their own system. A fundamental danger of recruiting only from within, however, is that favoritism and cronyism may prevent the selection of the best qualified individual for a given position. Nevertheless, some districts use internal recruitment almost exclusively, while attempting to adhere to the concepts of merit, equity, and legitimacy to make selection decisions.

Most of the literature on recruitment from within comes from the private sector where it is common practice in many large companies and is informed and guided by policy nurtured and developed within the organization. If the decision is made to recruit from within, then it is essential for the organization to have a systematic method of preparing individuals within the organization for positions of greater responsibility. Carnazza (1982) identifies three basic procedures found in private organizations for choosing management talent within the organization. The first is called the "crown prince." In this procedure, one person is slated and groomed to take over a specific vacancy when it occurs. The major advantage of this method is that when the vacancy does occur there is less disruption and discord than with other methods. The major disadvantage is the risk that exists in counting on one person should this person become unavailable.

A second selection procedure is called "the slate." Since this method calls for having several candidates available from which to fill a position, the loss of one does not create a difficult situation. However, Carnazza (1982) mentions two major disadvantages to this method. The first is that problems can occur when there is an excess of qualified managers with a need to manage. The second is that additional costs are incurred in grooming and training more than one person.

A third procedure is "the pool." The advantages which accrue from this method are that few, if any, unrealistic expectations of placement exist, and there is a continued availability of managers. Of the companies studied by Carnazza (1982), most used a combination of "the slate" and "the pool." A smaller number used a combination of "the crown prince" and "the slate."

In general, it is considered good practice to promote from within when possible and to select from outside only when suitable internal candidates are unavailable. At the same time it is thought desirable to fill some portion of higher managerial positions from outside in order to to bring fresh ideas into the organization (Beach 1985; Silber and Sherman, 1974). Additionally, many managers believe the policy of promoting from within contributes to employee morale and satisfaction with the job and the organization (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Dukes, 1972; Wanous, 1980). When recruiting from within, organizations may consider transfers, re-employment of former employees, or employee referral programs in addition to promotion opportunities (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Lopresto, 1972).

There are advantages of recruiting from inside an organization: the person finally selected is a known quantity who also knows the company's idiosyncrasies; the process is less costly to the organization; and, the process fosters high morale and can strongly motivate employees to do their best work (Sand, 1963; Lopresto, 1972; Dukes, 1972; Beach, 1985). Beach (1985) indicates that recruiting from within, insofar as possible, has several advantages:

1. Most people expect to advance to positions of higher pay and status during their work careers. Therefore, this policy fosters high morale. One opening in a higher-level position may cause a succession of individual advancements as people each in turn move up.
2. Management can more accurately appraise the skills, knowledge, and personality characteristics of its present employees than it can those of job applicants who are interviewed in the employment office. Therefore, there is less risk of error in selection and placement.
3. The recruitment and selection problem is simplified because there are only a few entry jobs, and the formal education, skill, and knowledge requirements for these are relatively modest.

There are, however, corresponding disadvantages to inside recruitment. First, a policy of promoting from within requires that records of employee status and growth be maintained and staff development or training programs to upgrade employee skills and abilities be implemented. This can be problematic for small companies (Lopresto, 1972; Dukes, 1972). Second, a policy of internal promotions prevents the infusion of new ideas at higher levels. Third, promoting from within may necessitate initial placement of new employees with high potential at levels where their potential is unrealized. If these individuals are not promoted, they will, in turn, become frustrated and discouraged (Beach, 1985). In addition, internal recruitment can lead to nepotism, over-conformity, and stagnation by preventing the infusion of new energy and ideas. Lack of confidentiality, difficulties encountered by employees in adjusting to new roles, and a loss of old associates can lead to additional problems (Sands, 1963). A further problem of recruiting from within is the danger of promoting a competent professional to a managerial position beyond the employee's competence (Shapero, 1985).

Selection Techniques

Once a qualified pool of candidates has been recruited, one must be selected to fill the vacant principalship. The purpose of the selection process is to choose the best applicant. Principal selection procedures portrayed in the literature are, in the main, descriptive. Most writers specify a set of steps to be followed in the process, although attention may be placed on particular selection devices. In this section we will review the various techniques that are used to select principals. These include the use of resumes and application blanks, reference checking, interviews, written tests, internships, and assessment centers.

Resumes and Application Blanks

Resumes are often used to screen applicants. While they provide valuable information, they frequently contain subjective descriptions of past and current professional assignments and other work-related activities. Thus, representation of past and present work and professional experience may be biased in favor of the person providing it or the position desired. As a consequence, many companies seek information from their own application blanks which are more objective and more tightly focused on company concerns than is information found on the typical resume (Lopresto, 1972; Spang, 1984).

Generally used to provide basic information about candidates from outside the organization, application blanks may be weighted or unweighted. If weighted, systematically scored, and truly correlated with job requirements, the application blank can be a valuable screening device. If unweighted, then some essential position requirements may not receive appropriate attention in the overall analysis of the information requested (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Sands, 1963; Lopresto, 1972; Lawrence et al., 1982).

Application blanks should be designed to reveal a candidate's qualifications, furnish information predictive of job success, and provide information to be followed up during an interview. Biographical data concerning education and previous work are particularly important since past performance is generally a good predictor of future performance (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Sands, 1963; Campbell et al., 1970, Bolton, 1973; Schmidt et al., 1979; Wareham, 1980; Shapero, 1985).

Application blank questions must be framed within legal parameters. Questions should be job-related and should not have the unintended effect of screening out minorities or women (Idelson, 1974; Griggs v. Duke Power Company, 1971). Uniform guidelines regulating employee selection procedures have been established for employers in the following groups: private sector, government contractors, employment agencies, and local, state, and federal governments (Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, 1978; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1983). Importantly, information supplied via the application blanks should be verified.

Reference Checking

Fundamentally, reference and background checking are done to verify the accuracy of information furnished by an applicant and to obtain supplemental data that may be useful in the selection decision (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Rabinowitz, 1979; Fox, 1983). In general, evidence of extensive use of reference checking at lower levels appears to be nonexistent. At higher levels, such checking tends to increase and to become more central to the process (Campbell, 1970). References may be in writing, by telephone, or face-to-face.

Letters of recommendation may be a source of unique variance in the selection process (Muchinsky, 1979). There is some agreement that the objectivity of written references is questionable. Negative information is usually left out due to fear of legal repercussions and there is a general tendency not to place negative views in writing (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Cascio, 1978; VonderEmbse and Wyse, 1985). Letters of recommendation are viewed more favorably when specific performance examples rather than numerical data (e.g., 1250 GRE score) are emphasized (Knouse, 1983). Reference checking via telephone is somewhat better since voice tone is often as important as words in conveying meaning (Sands, 1963; Campbell, 1970), and referents may be more willing to provide information that they do not wish to place in writing (Lopresto, 1972).

Visits to the job-site of candidates are probably the best sources of candidate information. Additionally, information about candidates can be obtained from previous supervisors, the personnel office, former co-workers, relatives, or neighbors (Lopresto, 1972). Past as well as present performance is usually considered to be one of the more valid predictors of future success. Before engaging in job-site visitations and interviews, an organization needs to be certain that such contacts are permissible. Moreover, written permission from the candidate should be obtained to prevent undesirable repercussions within the candidate's present employment situation or a possible law suit for invasion of privacy (Lopresto, 1972).

Campbell (1970) suggests using a reference check involving greater referent diversity. For example, a candidate may not indicate neighbors as a source to be checked, but they may, in fact, turn out to be among the better sources. For some positions, referents might also include the police, the military, and credit reporting agencies (Lopresto, 1972). Referent responses should be weighed against all other sources of applicant information to form a more complete picture of a candidate.

Interviews

The most widely used device in the process of selecting principals is the interview (Newberry, 1977; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983; Pokorny, 1985). However, the use of interviews in the selection process has been criticized because interviews are seldom open and objective (Bolton, 1973; Howes, 1978), often subjective and based on intuitive feelings (Newberry, 1977), and worthless in reliably predicting future behavior (McIntyre, 1974). Yet they are viewed as essential in the screening process (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983). The usefulness of the interview is thought to be greatly enhanced when the interview is structured, the interviewers skilled, and a uniform rating system employed (The Right Principal for the Right School, 1967; Pennsylvania State Department of Education, 1971; Ferguson, 1981; Driscoll, 1982; Zakariya, 1983).

Opinions vary regarding the relative usefulness or desirability of structured or unstructured interviews. Sands (1963) argues that the structured interview is a "crutch" for the inexperienced interviewer and prevents the use of personal judgment. By contrast, the non-directive or unstructured interview by design makes use of comprehensive questions which encourage the interviewer to cover relevant information. To be done effectively, the unstructured interview requires a skilled and highly trained interviewer, and it takes more time than a structured interview.

To use unstructured interviews effectively, interviewers must be aware of their own biases. They must be able to make effective use of timing, self-restraint, judgment, and open-ended questions (Sands, 1963; Lopez, 1972). A good interviewer will look for evidence of an interviewee's role awareness, energy level, overall orientation toward work and the role it plays in the candidate's life, the presence of high career goals, a history of completing what has been undertaken, inner motivation (usually from family orientation), emotional maturity (judgment, finances, family, conversations with past employers), and a willingness to relocate (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Sands, 1963; Lopez, 1972; Neff, 1980; Miller, 1981). Wareham (1980) suggests uncovering information a candidate may wish to hide by returning to "touchy" areas, watching for signs of tension, using a pause to promote more talking, and using intuition. He further suggests reflecting and restating as a means of clarifying meaning. Miller (1981) believes that critical job requirements should be indirectly assessed through the candidate's self-reported enjoyable achievement experiences.

Some companies may set up unstructured but evaluative interviews in such a way that the candidate is not aware of being interviewed. A driver who picks up the candidate at the airport may be a trained interviewer asking questions that appear to be polite conversation but in reality are meant to determine whether or not the candidate has characteristics that are considered desirable. Others introduced to, or recently encountered by, the candidate enroute to an interview with the Chief Executive Officer may also be gathering information. Thus, by the time the candidate enters the formal interview situation, the chief executive already has an idea of the candidate's characteristics (Plenninger, 1977).

A major problem with unstructured interviews, especially when conducted by untrained interviewers, is that the results often reflect nothing more than the interviewer's likes or dislikes and may have little relevance to the job performance. Also, the "halo effect," which generalizes an initial impression--favorable or unfavorable--to the entire interview, is more likely to occur when an unstructured, non-directive interview is used (Sands, 1963; Mayfield, 1964; Wareham, 1980; Decker, 198[illegible]).

Interviews may be conducted individually, by small interview committees, or by large, broad-based committees. Some disadvantages of large, broad-based interview committees include the following: they are time-consuming, difficult to manage logistically, dangerous in a politically conflicting situation, constraining due to visibility and accountability, and frustrating when favorites are not picked. A study by Hogan and Zenke (1986) indicates that the utility of interviewing is not high. Although interviewing is not more expensive than other selection techniques, its validity, using superintendents' ratings of their job performance to measure the success of the interviewing process, is extremely low.

Proponents of interviewing argue that it remains the single most important tool for integrating data with impressions (Stone and Kendall, 1956; Beach, 1985). It is admittedly subjective--an art and not a science. It is, however, generally acknowledged as revelatory of being able to get along with co-workers--an important part of success in a management position. A candidate with adequate experience, expertise, and information may not be able to lead or accomplish a mission if personal conflicts prevent him or her from establishing necessary rapport with others. As yet, the interview remains an important way to assess this aspect of a person's suitability (Sands, 1963; Campbell, 1970; Stevens, 1981; Beach, 1985; Shapero, 1985).

Another advantage of the interview is that participation of interviewers in the process contributes to commitment to the decision reached (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

Written Tests

Written tests are a very attractive selection technique for districts wanting to improve the legitimacy of their process. The popularity of tests is due to the desire to be scientific and objective (The Right Principal for the Right School, 1967).

There are three basic types of selection tests: aptitude, achievement, and psychological. Aptitude and achievement tests are skill and information specific. Generally, aptitude tests focus upon what a person can learn or is capable of performing. Achievement tests focus upon what a person already knows. A well-designed description of the position created at the beginning of the recruitment process can facilitate the use or design of tests focused upon the skills needed at the time of hiring rather than those that can be learned on the job. This procedure can prevent tests from serving as credential barriers which may eliminate candidates from further consideration and ill serve the selection process (Sands, 1963; Miller, 1971; Beach, 1985; Shapero, 1985).

Psychological tests, the third type of test, assess the candidates' personal qualities. The Office of Education Research and Improvement (1987) cautions evaluators against standard psychological testing, asserting that few are likely to be helpful in selecting the right principal.

Standard psychological tests have been used frequently in the selection of students preparing for principalships or educational leadership positions, or potential principals. In selecting students for an educational administration master's degree program in Tennessee, Graff and Kimbrough (1956) report that students are rated on a guide whose components include interpersonal relations, intelligent operation, condition of physical and emotional health, ethical and moral strength, communication adequacy, and operation as a citizen. These dimensions, which are thought to be requisite for effective leadership, have been predicted through the use of several psychological tests: Walkson-Glaser Critical Thinking Test, Miller Analogies, Cooperative English (Expression), Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory, Cooperative English (Mechanics), F Scale, Kuder Preference (Music and Computational), Allport-Vernon Study of Values (Economic and Aesthetic).

In an effort to replace self-selection as the sole basis for entry into a principal preparation program, Stanford University, as part of the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, used a series of tests, along with observations and interviews, to select teachers for participation in their administrative preparatory program. Tests used included the Miller Analogies Test, Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values, Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory, Public Opinion Questionnaire, and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Other tests used, but not as part of the admission decision, were the Strong Vocational Interest Inventory, Group Rorschach, and Analysis of Classroom Situation (an adaptation of the Thematic Apperception Test). The tests used to select candidates for participation in the administrative preparation program were thought to provide assessments of personal qualities necessary for successful school administration such as intelligence, social motivation, general education, adaptability, ambition, and confidence (Moore, 1962).

McIntyre (1974) argues that the use of tests, while not perfect, is better than the subjective measures used in selecting principals. Such tests as the NTE, GRE, Miller Analogies, and the Administration and Supervision Test can provide useful information when used as part of an overall selection process that includes formal preparation and internship (McIntyre, 1974).

In the process of screening and assessing potential principals for Catholic schools a variety of instruments are used: Graphoanalysis, Learning Style Inventory, LIFO (a guide for increasing productivity and avoiding problems associated with an individual's excesses), Management by Strength (enables people to understand their personality differences as strengths to be used and shared with others), Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Personal Inventory, Personal Profile System, and Strength Development Inventory (Manno, 1985). Through the use of such instruments the extent to which the individual possesses desired basic qualities and competencies to become principal of a Catholic school is determined. Additionally, areas in which improvement is needed are discovered (Manno, 1985).

To be useful, a test must have an acceptable level of validity--it measures what it claims to measure, the best performers receive the highest scores--and reliability--it consistently measures what it is designed to measure, using the same sample, over time (Griggs v. Duke Power Company, 1971; Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, 1978).

Three methods of test validation for personnel selection are recognized by the American Psychological Association (Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests, 1974) and by federal guidelines (Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, 1978): criterion related validity, content validity, and construct validity. Briefly stated, criterion related validity refers to the correlation between the test scores of job holders and some aspect of their job performance (concurrent validity) or the relationship of employee test scores obtained at one point in time and, say, their job performance at a later point in time (predictive validity). Content validity provides an indication of whether the test seeks to reasonably measure a representative sample of behaviors or knowledge based on the judgment of a panel of experts. Construct validity is used to determine whether a test measures an assumed or hypothetical individual factor thought to account for job performance (McCormick and Ilgen, 1980; Kerlinger, 1964; Cronbach, 1971). Reliability, validity, and the use of trained, qualified people to administer tests and analyze results are of vital importance in the use of psychological as well as other tests (Albright, Glennon, and Smith, 1963; Sands, 1963; Souerwine, 1971; Campbell, 1970; McCormick and Ilgen, 1980; Beach, 1985; Shapero, 1985).

Internships

Essentially internships are local, school-district sponsored preparation programs designed to develop and hone the administrative skills of persons identified as having the potential to become school leaders. As a consequence, districts are able to recruit and select individuals for principalships from a pool of candidates whose skills and abilities are known. Based on a national survey of superintendents, Pokorny (1985) reports that the most popular method of training potential principals is the school district internship. These programs may be conducted entirely within the district (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983) or in cooperation with a university (McIntyre, 1974; Bruce, 1976).

The process of identifying individuals who will be reviewed for placement in an internship program generally includes wide internal announcement of the intent to select individuals for participation in the district's internship program, a series of written and performance based exercises and interviews which are rated by a review panel, and selection of the most promising candidates (McIntyre, 1974; Bruce, 1976; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

Once in the program, candidates receive training in areas such as problem solving, curriculum development, conflict management, community involvement, and personnel management (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983). Participants in internship programs visit other school sites, attend conferences, participate in workshops and simulations, and rotate among non-school settings, different school levels and sites, and the district office (Farquhar, 1972; Bruce, 1976; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

Upon completion of the internship, candidates may be assessed to determine competency attainment through the use of assessment centers or structured interviews (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983). Candidates who successfully complete the internship program generally become eligible for an entry level administrative position, for example, vice principal.

In an internship program used in Kamloops, British Columbia, candidates are nominated by central office and school site staff to participate in an executive development program. From this pool, candidates are selected to undergo an extensive screening process from which emerge those who will take part in the district's principal training program. The screening process includes the use of tests, questionnaires, and simulations, role playing, written exercises, and interviews. Selected candidates then participate in internships over a four-year period and work toward the master's degree in educational administration. They also serve in the final two years as administrative assistants (vice principals). They may be appointed to a principalship during this period, but generally this occurs at the end of the fourth year (Bruce, 1976).

As demonstrated by the example of Kamloops, the use of internship programs does not eliminate the need to develop other selection techniques. A decision must still be made as to who will participate in the internship program. Thus other selection techniques, such as interviews and written tests, are used to select interns. Still, internship programs should not be thought of exclusively as a personnel development technique. The internship program does more than prepare future principals. Importantly, it improves the selection process by providing an opportunity to view the interns in a field setting over a period of time.

Assessment Centers

The assessment center concept refers to the use of a staff of trained assessors who evaluate the behaviors necessary to become successful in a given position, develop techniques to assess those behaviors, and interpret and evaluate the behaviors (Moses, 1977). The process involves in-basket exercises, management games or simulations, group discussion exercises, written exercises, fact finding and decision making, paper-and-pencil tests, role playing, and interviews (Moses, 1977; Crooks, 1977; Wikstrom, 1971; Beach, 1985). The assessment center model can be used for personnel selection, appraisal of managerial potential, and individual development (Moses, 1977; Jeswald, 1977).

Assessment centers were first used in the United States in the Office of Strategic Services in the 1940's to select and train individuals who would be successful spies (Moses, 1977; MacKinnon, 1977). They have been used in industry since the 1950's, A.T.&T. being the first company to develop assessment centers for routine use in identification and development of management skills.

As defined by the Third International Congress on the Assessment Center Method first in 1975 and revised in 1980

> An assessment center consists of a standardized evaluation of behavior based on multiple inputs. Multiple trained observers and techniques are used. Judgments about behavior are made, in part, from specially developed assessment simulations.
>
> These judgments are pooled by the assessors at an evaluation meeting during which all relevant assessment data are reported and discussed, and the assessors agree on the evaluation of the dimensions and any overall evaluation that is made (Task Force on Assessment Center Standards, 1980, p. 35).

To evaluate the predictive validity of performance scores in the A.T.&T. assessment centers, Bray and associates designed a major longitudinal study (the Management Progress Study) in which candidates would be assessed, but their scores would not be reported to management (Bray, 1964; Bray and Grant, 1966). The percentages of those assessed as having high ability who received promotions within the next eight years were compared with those promoted within the same time period who had been assessed as having low ability. The correlation between especially mobile candidates and high scores was extremely high--especially so for college and university graduates (Bray, Campbell and Grant, 1974).

Assessment centers were introduced in public education in the 1970's (Hersey, 1982a). In conjunction with a special committee of the American Psychological Association, the National Association of Secondary School

Principals (NASSP) developed an assessment center model to assist in identifying, developing, selecting, and promoting building administrators (Hersey, 1977, 1982b).

As of 1986 the NASSP assessment center model was used in 40 sites throughout the United States and in Canada and Germany. Additionally, over 3,000 participants had been assessed for administrative positions (Hersey, 1986a). The NASSP assessment center process includes simulations of activities in which principals engage or simulations of problems which they must solve. Six exercises are included: two leaderless group exercises, two in-basket simulations, a fact-finding exercise, and a personal interview. Six trained assessors observe the performance of 12 participants over a two-day period. Assessors prepare written reports on each exercise for each participant and discuss and rate each participant's performance in twelve skill areas. A comprehensive written report of the participant's strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for development is prepared for each participant and given to him or her during a feedback session (Hersey, 1982a). The skill areas assessed are categorized as follows under four broad areas:

A. Administrative Skills
    1. problem analysis
    2. judgement
    3. organizational ability
    4. decisiveness
B. Interpersonal Skills
    5. leadership
    6. sensitivity
    7. stress tolerance
C. Communication

8. oral communication
9. written communication

D. Other dimensions

10. range of interests
11. personal motivation
12. educational values.

The operational definitions of the twelve skill areas are shown in Table 2.

The NASSP assessment center has been validated by Schmitt and his associates at Michigan State University. The validation study first sought to determine validity or the inter-rater reliability of assessor ratings of participant skill levels within the centers. A second facet of the study was concerned with content validity. This portion of the study was designed to ascertain whether the exercises used in the assessment process were 1) representative of the tasks principals perform, and 2) essential to successful job performance. A job analysis was conducted to determine the duties and responsibilities of principals and to establish the appropriateness of the performance tasks included in the centers (Schmitt, 1980). A third component of the study addressed criterion related validity--the relationship between participant performance on the tasks in the center and on-the-job performance. Here the issue was whether a participant who earned high scores on assessment center performance was subsequently rated as an effective school administrator. To determine on-the-job effectiveness, performance ratings were obtained from teachers, supervisors, support staff, and the candidates themselves. In every area included in the validation study, the NASSP assessment centers were found to be satisfactory (Hersey, 1982a; Schmitt, 1982).

TABLE 2

Operational Definitions of Skills Assessed in the NASSP Assessment Center

SKILLS TO BE ASSESSED	
1. PROBLEM ANALYSIS	Ability to seek out relevant data and analyze complex information to determine the important elements of a problem situation; searching for information with a purpose.
2. JUDGEMENT	Ability to reach logical conclusions and make high quality decisions based on available information; skill in identifying educational needs and setting priorities; ability to evaluate critically written communications.
3. ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY	Ability to plan, schedule, and control the work of others; skill in using resources in an optimal fashion; ability to deal with a volume of paperwork and heavy demands on one's time.
4. DECISIVENESS	Ability to recognize when a decision is required (disregarding the quality of the decision) and to act quickly.
5. LEADERSHIP	Ability to get others involved in solving problems; ability to recognize when a group requires direction, to interact with a group effectively and to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.
6. SENSITIVITY	Ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of others; skill in resolving conflicts; tact in dealing with persons from different backgrounds; ability to deal effectively with people concerning emotional issues; knowing what information to communicate and to whom.
7. STRESS TOLERANCE	Ability to perform under pressure and during opposition; ability to think on one's feet.
8. ORAL COMMUNICATION	Ability to make a clear oral presentation of facts or ideas.
9. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	Ability to express ideas clearly in writing; to write appropriately for different audiences -- students, teachers, parents, et al.
10. RANGE OF INTEREST	Competence to discuss a variety of subjects -- educational, political, current events, economic, etc.; desire to actively participate in events.
11. PERSONAL MOTIVATION	Need to achieve in all activities attempted; evidence that work is important to personal satisfaction; ability to be self-policing.
12. EDUCATIONAL VALUES	Possession of a well-reasoned educational philosophy; receptiveness to new ideas and change.

Source: NASSP, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091

Assessment centers provide an objective and useful way of selecting school administrators (McKay and McCord, 1978; Schmitt, 1982; Van Newkirk, 1984; Jones and Godfrey, 1986). They are arguably more effective in selecting administrators than such individually used conventional techniques as personal preference, the use of aptitude tests to predict job success, verification of past behaviors as indicated in resumes and letters of reference, and determining whether the background or work history of candidates parallels the experience of successful administrators (Tesolowski and Morgan, 1980). They are viewed as having benefits for assessors (McCall, 1986; Pritchett, 1986) and assessees (Landholm, 1986; Wendell, 1986). Yet it must be pointed out that whereas school districts adopting the NASSP assessment center model must evaluate each of the twelve skill areas included in the model, they may weight these areas differently (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

A variation of the NASSP assessment center model is the Management Assessment Center (MAC) used in the Dade County, Florida, public schools. The MAC has been used since 1982 to assist in the selection of principals and vice principals (Gomez, 1985). Developed by Assessment Designs, Inc., a private consulting firm, the MAC includes nine skill areas judged to be important for successful school performance determined through a job analysis in Dade County. These are leadership, organizing and planning, perception, decision making, decisiveness, interpersonal skills, adaptability, oral communication, and written communication. Three activities are used to assess participants' performance in these dimensions: an in-basket exercise, a parent conference simulation, and a teacher observation simulation. Participant performance is assessed over a two-day period by three assessors (Gomez, 1985).

Use of the MAC is one of five steps in the Dade County process for selection of principals and assistant principals. According to Gomez (1985), these steps include acquiring a state administration/supervision certificate and taking a diagnostic district Technical Skills Test for School-Level Administrators which informs potential candidates of weaknesses and gives advice for remediation. Successful MAC performance results in placement on an eligibility list; eligible candidates may interview for appropriate positions for a period of two years.

Although the MAC has had an adverse impact on racial minorities (they perform less well than racial majority group members), it has been evaluated to be effective in predicting job performance. Yet the interview-MAC-selection process, given levels of passing scores used, is not judged to be superior to the interview-only selection process (Gomez, 1985).

In Utah, according to McCleary and Ogawa (1985), some districts may use conventional methods to screen candidates for administrative positions and have the finalists go through an assessment center. Other districts may use conventional methods to select individuals who have applied to participate in the assessment center. Still others refer individuals identified informally as having leadership potential to the assessment center. Districts use assessment centers to provide one source of information about a candidate that can be combined with other conventionally obtained data, (e.g,, work records, and the particular needs of the situation in making selection decisions (McCleary and Ogawa, 1985).

Whereas the NASSP assessment center provides performance ratings on each of 12 skill dimensions, factor analysis of assessment center ratings in Utah indicate the presence of only 1 factor, and at the national level, 4 factors (Ogawa and Oxaal, 1986). The findings for an analysis of the Intermountain-

NASSP Assessment Center Project (University of Utah) data of only 1 factor and 4 factors for other NASSP center projects indicate a high intercorrelation among the 12 skill areas. For example, the re-analysis of NASSP data drawn from assessment center projects in Virginia, Florida, Alabama, California, and Maryland, revealed the presence of four factors: administrative analysis or analytical skills, self-presentational skills, sensitivity, and written communication (Ogawa and Oxaal, 1986). Factor one, administrative analysis, included problem analysis, judgment, decisiveness, leadership, organizational ability, and range of interests. Factor two, self-presentational skills, included educational values, stress tolerance, oral communication, and personal motivation. Sensitivity and written communication, factors three and four, were single dimension factors.

The significance of the Ogawa and Oxaal study (1986) is that it suggests that assessment of the areas included in the NASSP model may be more a function of the individual proclivities and biases of the assessors than of independent ratings. Apparently, overall assessee scores as determined by assessors do not reflect equal weighting of all the skill areas included in the NASSP model. A similar phenomenon has also been noted in non-educational assessment centers (Klimoski and Strickland, 1977; Thornton and Byham, 1982). Decision makers in the selection process must therefore be cognizant of what factors account for overall assessment center ratings. Clearly, as the use of assessment centers to select school administrators expands, more research is needed in this area.

In general, assessment centers have been found to be effective selection devices (Campbell and Bray, 1967; Byham, 1970; Wikstrom, 1971; Huck, 1977; Moses and Byham, 1977; Cissimi, 1982; Brubaker, 1983). Yet questions can be raised regarding dissimilar results from different panels of observers, the relevance of various exercises for a particular job, and the influence upon assessors of known traits possessed by candidates selected for management positions (Boche, 1977). It is conceivable that at the root of overall assessment center scores lies a subjective judgement superficially legitimized by a process designed to promote objectivity but not necessarily accomplishing it (Shapero, 1985). Furthermore, assessment centers are expensive to operate (Boche, 1977; McCrimmon, 1978; Wexley and Yukl, 1984; Beach, 1985). As an alternative, a study by Hogan and Zenke (1986) indicates that the use of selected assessment exercises is more cost effective than interviewing, written tests, or assessment centers. These researchers point out that though the assessment exercises were the second most expensive technique (after assessment centers), they were the most successful in choosing principals who performed effectively.

Simulations

A simulation of a conference or presentation can give a selection committee some insight as to how the candidate would behave on the job. Role playing--having the candidate pretend to be in a situation with which principals are often confronted--is frequently part of an assessment center's activities. However, a candidate may be asked to make a presentation to the selection committee as well as to independent assessors.

Landers (1981) reports that in West Germany candidates may be required to perform any one of several duties of a principal, for example, evaluate a teacher. While Landers mentions presenting a demonstration lesson as one of the duties, demonstration lessons are more appropriate to teacher selection than to principal selection.

To determine whether or not a candidate has characteristics that enable him or her to perform well as a principal, Morris et al. (1984) suggest relying primarily on simulations which might include the performance of activities such as the following:

1. In-box exercises--a series of real-life situations to which the candidate has to respond as a principal within an allotted time period.
2. Personal conference simulation--the candidate assumes the role of a principal and confers with, for example, an assistant principal regarding a pre-described issue. This conference is evaluated by observers familiar with the issue.
3. Presentation simulation--in the role of a principal, the candidate makes a presentation to, say, the school's parent advisory council. The presentation is based on materials the candidate is given to study for a brief period before the presentation. Members of the district office staff study the same material given to the candidate and become members of the audience. They raise questions at the end of the presentation. Later these audience members assess the candidate's performance.
4. Informal measures designed to assess such behavioral characteristics as self-organization, closure orientation, energy deployment, managerial imagination, capacity for growth, low-profile and nature, (e.g., emotional maturity).

In addition to simulations that primarily test interpersonal skills, simulations can be designed to test analytical skills. A typical problem-solving exercise described by the Office of Education Research and Improvement (1987) is one in which the participants will be given a written description of the problem, find additional information from other sources, write up their proposed solution, and present it orally.

Civil Service-Like Lists

School districts can also choose to select principals in the same manner in which the public sector makes personnel appointments--the civil service system. In the civil service system lists of eligible candidates are developed from several sources: application blanks; interviews; knowledge, aptitude and performance tests; and reference and background checks. Candidates are hired from the list as vacancies occur using one of the following four rules (Siegel and Myrtle, 1985):

> Rule of One: Only the highest ranked is certified; the best candidate is predicted with complete certainty. The problem in this instance is that precise determination of future performance is an inexact science.
>
> The Rule of Three: Commonly used in the Federal Civil Service, the top three candidates are certified and presented for consideration to an agency or department seeking to fill a position. A major problem with the "rule of three," as currently used, is that eligibles are often separated only by fractions of points. Thus, the top five or six candidates may be so close in some overall score as to invalidate certifying only the top three as being the most qualified. Also, the overall scores of the top five or six candidates may be tied. When this is the case, extra consideration may be accorded to persons with higher scores on more heavily weighted parts of the examination; or preference may be given to federal employees and ex-employees.
>
> Rule of Three Scores and Six Standings: Names are grouped into the three highest scores categories. Scores are rounded off and all applicants attaining either of the highest three scores are grouped by that score. Because of a need for greater flexibility, eligible candidates are placed into one of six categories. According to Saso and Tanis (1974), the percentage score an applicant obtains on each portion of the examination given is multiplied by the weight assigned

> to it. These scores are added and appropriate preference points included, (e.g., veterans' service). Six categories of standings are then prepared and each eligible candidate classified according to his or her standing on the list. The names are certified one group at a time and when less than three names are certified, names of the next group in order of standing may be requested for appointment consideration.
>
> Reliability of Scores: Sometimes referred to as the Michigan System, this is a modification of the Rule of Three scores and is based upon the reliability of employment tests scores. The certification of eligible candidates is a function of the determination of a bandwidth or a range of points within which candidates must score. A bandwidth = 30 x $(1 - r_{tt})$ where total possible scores = 30
> r_{tt} = reliability of the selection test in question
>
> Thus, if a selection test had a reliability of .90, the bandwidth would be 30 x (1 - .90) or 3 points. Therefore, eligible candidates certified would be those with scores from 98 to 100 (Saso and Tanis, 1974).

Such formal procedures are rarely used by school districts. However, Turner (1987) describes the Los Angeles Unified School District's appointment system for Secondary Assistant Principals and Assistant Principals to be quite similar to the civil service system. Promotional examinations, which consist of a resume review, evaluation from referents, and an interview, are used to establish an eligible list from which all but special appointments are made.

Sharpe's comparative study of high school principal selection in the United States and Australia (1976) reveals that the selection process in Australia also has a great deal in common with the civil service system. A potential candidate must pass an inspection to be placed on a promotion list. Appointments are made by seniority from that list to the position of department head. After at least four years as department head, the candidate may move to placement on Promotion List III, provided the inspection has been successful. On the basis of seniority, appointments are made from that list to the deputy principal list. After one full year as deputy principal, application can be made for an inspection to be placed on Promotion List IV for potential selection as principal. The level IV inspection team spends four days inspecting the candidate. The team consists of the local elementary school district inspector, the supervising secondary school inspector, and two other secondary inspectors.

Multiple Selection Techniques

Authors vary in recommending which combinations of selection techniques should be used. For instance, writing more than 30 years ago, Neagley (1953) pointed out that the following methods for selecting school administrators can be used together: application forms; letters of recommendation; aptitude tests; personality tests--self-ratings; personality ratings by others; systematic techniques, nomination of prospective administrators by senior officers; situational tests--interaction interviews, group interview, psychodramas; problem solving in a leadership exercise to estimate adaptiveness and other personal qualities; interest and value traits determined through the use of such inventories as the Kuder Preference Record; forced choice ratings in which raters are forced to make a choice between favorable or unfavorable descriptions of a candidate with one of the descriptions relating to perceived executive success; and the use of authoritarian-equalitarian scale ratings to define leadership style, which is thought to be related to positive or negative group productivity and feelings (pp. 22-29).

Teitelbaum and Lee (1972) report that superintendents in large school districts review the following kinds of information to select principals: training and formal college preparation, recommendations, credentials, previous experience, written objective tests, written essay tests, interviews, and on-the-job performance evaluations.

Bowser (1980) outlines a selection process in recounting the experience of a so-called fictitious assistant principal candidate who participates in a day-long interview session. In this selection process, candidates initially filed an application for the position while also submitting an essay on why they desired the position. The process next included an all-day session in which each candidate was first interviewed by a three-person panel consisting of a junior high principal, a university professor, and a parent. Next, each candidate completed a written exercise giving short answers to questions regarding the district's operation and longer, essay-type answers relative to effective discipline, teacher evaluation, and junior high education. A second panel interview with each candidate followed, conducted by another junior high principal, a junior high school teacher, and a district administrator. All candidates had a group lunch followed by a group interaction session with the superintendent. Here, candidates responded to questions posed by the superintendent and reacted to other candidates' responses. Following this session, final selection procedures were explained by the superintendent.

In West Germany, Landers (1981) reports that officials in the intermediate administrative unit conduct screening and evaluating, and recommend candidates to the state ministry for final selection. Candidates may be required by selection authorities to present a demonstration lesson, conduct a meeting or conference, evaluate a teacher, and conduct an evaluation interview with the teacher. The candidate's performance in these areas and on a required interview is assessed. These data, along with the recommendation of powerful teacher councils (unions) which serve in a consultative role during the selection process, are used to make final selection choices.

The selection process used in Bedford, New York, is slightly different from the foregoing descriptions, but retains several similar features. In Bedford, according to Meese (1981), a small group of administrators initially screens administrative candidates. Those meeting basic selection criteria are interviewed by a 13- to 17-member committee of administrators, parents, teacher association representatives, and representatives of various school subject areas at various grade levels. This interview is highly structured and lasts one hour. Interviewers rate the candidates using predetermined criteria. After discussion, the top six candidates are presented to the superintendent who, along with two other district administrators, conducts a final interview. The final selection decision is made by the superintendent.

Selection on the Basis of School Levels

Several writers have specified selection criteria on the basis of school level. This is more frequently the case for selection of elementary school principals than for secondary principals. Whether or not distinctions should be made in selection criteria by school level is unresolved . Guzzetti and Marks (1984) report that there is no significant difference in the performance frequency of instructional leadership tasks between principals at various grade levels. By contrast, Firestone and Herriot (1982) find that, although both elementary and secondary principals have responsibility for school climate, there are differences in their leadership behavior.

Elementary principals are thought to be like a head coach, concerned with day-to-day work and frequent staff interaction, whereas secondary principals are more like a corporate executive, interested in resource allocation and external relations. The conclusions reached by Guzzetti and Marks and Firestone and Herriott serve to justify the need for continuing research in this area. Because of the inconclusiveness of the data no distinctions were made in the recruitment and selection techniques and criteria reported.

Summary

Selection criteria for principals tend to focus on personal and professional characteristics. Little difference is generally noted by school level. Within the personal domain fall such characteristics as intellect, good health, verbal facility, and self-confidence. Professional characteristics include human relation skills, communication skills, organizational or managerial skills, decision-making skills, and previous training and experience. Researchers are concerned that selection criteria have not been validated as predictive of a principal's success or effectiveness for given situations. In fact, some criteria, such as educational training and teaching and administrative experience, have been found to be unrelated to the effectiveness of principals or educational administrators. Of equal importance, however, is the view that many school districts fail to make known what criteria are used to select principals. Thus the selection process is characterized frequently by subjectivity, impressionism, and politics.

Recruitment and Selection of Women and Minorities

Both women and minorities are underrepresented in school administrative positions (Coursen, 1975). Minorities, however, are more underrepresented than women. Nationally, in 1928, women represented 55% of the elementary principals and 3% of secondary principals and superintendents. By 1980 those percentages had fallen to 18% and less than 1% respectively (Rosser, 1980). More recent data compiled by the American Association of School Administrators, as reported by Metzger (1985), reveal that women hold 16% of all U.S. principalships (23% at the elementary level and 7% at the secondary level) and 1.8% of U.S. superintendencies. The percentage of minorities holding principal and assistant principal positions has been approximately 10% over the past decade (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983).

Among the reasons suggested for the underrepresentation of women and minorities are limited access to informal systems and sponsorship (Rosser, 1980; Haven, 1980; Baltzell and Dentler, 1983; Metzger, 1985); sex discrimination and sex-role stereotyping (Poteet, 1968; Kimmel, Harlow, and Topping, 1979; Bonuso and Skakeshaft, 1982; Metzger, 1985); and an inadequate pool of qualified candidates (Haven, 1980, 1980a; Metzger, 1985). Additionally, Moland (1985) concludes from her study of elementary principal selection in Texas that school districts in that state usually do not recruit minorities and women for elementary school principalships. This condition may well exist in other states though no evidence was found in the literature to support that supposition. In addition to the above, other reasons for the underrepresentation of women include family imposed constraints, women's low career aspirations, and lack of confidence and initiative (Metzger, 1985).

Although the underrepresentation of women and minorities in principal or vice principal positions continues generally to be characteristic of public schools throughout the nation, there is some evidence that women have administrative skills that are more highly rated than men. For example, Meskin (1974) concludes from her review of several studies that female elementary school principals have a propensity for democratic leadership, are thorough in their approach to problem solving, have a bent toward instructional leadership, and are rated highly by teachers and supervisors. Further, female elementary principals are considered superior to men in the areas of staff morale and student achievement (Mickish, 1971). Finally, Hersey (1982) indicates that in the NASSP assessment center there is a slight tendency for women to do better than men, particularly with respect to communication skills.

To increase the number of women and minorities holding administrative positions, school districts must first establish clear written policies which proclaim the reality of their commitment to active recruitment and appointment of members of these groups to such posts (Haven et. al., 1980; Moland, 1985). It has also been suggested that a clearinghouse of potential minority candidates be established, that schools of education more actively recruit minorities into their educational administration programs, and that internship programs operated by school districts aggressively recruit minority group members (Sommerville, 1975; Haven et. al., 1980). Another strategy used successfully in Arizona for increasing the number and percentage of women in school administration, which should be similarly effective for minorities, is to develop special workshops to enhance skills and attitudes, provide support, and evaluate job search requirements such as resumes and interviews (Metzger, 1985). Such workshops and special university programs have also been effective in other locations (Kimmel, Harlow, and Topping, 1979). At another level, a large applicant pool of women and minorities from inside and outside the district should be established, principal selection criteria should be scrutinized by women and minority educators for discriminatory effect, and this selection committee should include minorities and women (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983).

Part II
A Model for the Recruitment and Selection of Principals

There is no single best method of recruiting and selecting educational leaders for elementary and secondary schools. Each school district must develop procedures and selection criteria that satisfy the needs of the district and the specific school for which a selection decision is to be made. Recruitment and selection policies should be established by the school board with the collaboration of the superintendent and his or her staff to ensure that the process is open, has integrity, and is designed to attract and select outstanding candidates, including women and minorities. Moreover, school-specific selection criteria should be carefully defined with the participation of school and community members who will be affected by the decision.

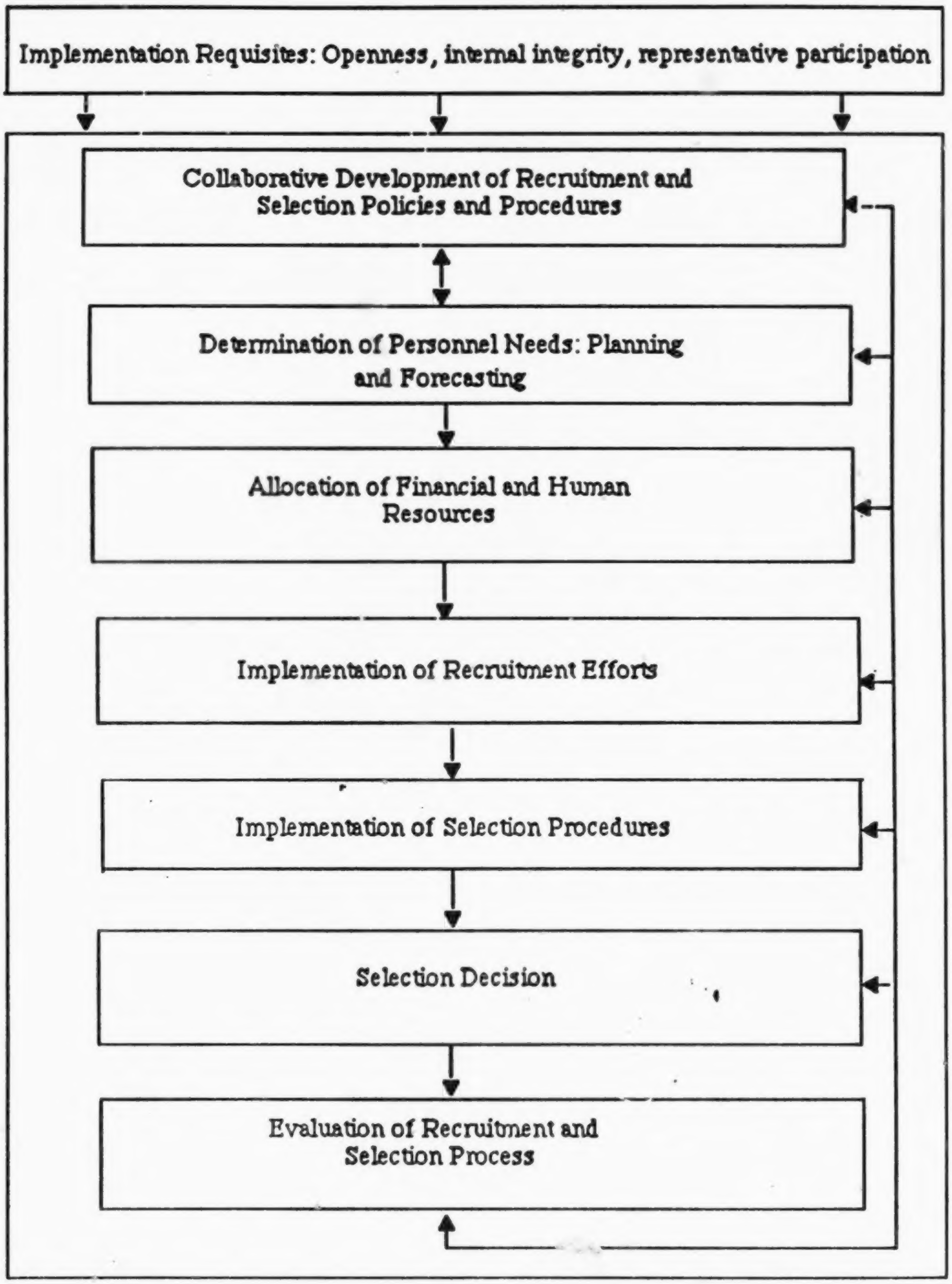
To increase the probability of selecting outstanding candidates, multiple data sources and devices should be used. The literature regarding recruitment and selection devices commonly used was reviewed in the earlier sections. It is against the backdrop of this literature in private, public, and school settings, and in experience, that a model for the recruitment and selection of principals is suggested. This model depicts recruitment and selection as a fluid, interrelated set of events predicated on a set of pre-conditions which operate within a feedback system. The model is shown as Figure 1.

Components of the Model

The model has several major components: collaborative development of recruitment and selection policies and procedures, determination of personnel needs, planning and forecasting, allocation of financial and human resources, implementation of recruitment efforts, implementation of selection procedures, selection decision and evaluation of the recruitment and

Figure 1

Model for the Recruitment and Selection of Elementary and Secondary School Leaders


Implementation Requisites: Openness, internal integrity, representative participation
Collaborative Development of Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures
Determination of Personnel Needs: Planning and Forecasting
Allocation of Financial and Human Resources
Implementation of Recruitment Efforts
Implementation of Selection Procedures
Selection Decision
Evaluation of Recruitment and Selection Process

selection process. Whereas the model is conceptualized as a linear progression of steps, each step or component exists in a requisite environment of openness, internal integrity, and representative participation. Stated differently, if the recruitment and selection process is to work effectively, then the environment in which it is conducted must be open in terms of ensuring that the process is public and known to all appropriate and interested individuals, that internal politics will not influence selections, and that a demonstrated commitment exists to attracting and hiring male and female minority group members as well as non-minority females. It also must ensure that the procedures for recruitment and selection are well-formulated, based on job-specific reasonable criteria, merit, and school needs, and that they are adhered to, and that applications are processed fairly and in a timely manner, relevant information obtained and checked as appropriate, and assignments for systematically processing applications clearly established and understood. Finally, individuals who are truly representative of the school and its communities, who are appropriate district office administrators, and who have a clear vision of the school, its mission, and its needs, should be selected for involvement in developing and implementing recruitment and selection procedures.

Collaborative Development of Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures

An initial step in the recruitment and selection process is to decide who will be involved. In this regard, an open process with wide participation by the various constituencies concerned with the school is essential. Through this participatory endeavor the mission and needs of the school for which a leader is being sought should be fully explored and clarified. To assist in this endeavor the school district should facilitate an appropriate job analysis. This analysis should not only examine currently performed leader tasks, but also expected tasks and directions in which the school should be led. Additionally, student and community demographic data should be carefully examined along with school staff professional needs. As a result of these activities, characteristics the new leader should possess will be suggested, examined and modified as necessary. Identifying the desired characteristics of the new leader will be an evolving process, but once agreed upon, recruitment can commence. Thus, the first component of our model is that the policies and processes through which recruitment and selection is to be accomplished should be collaboratively developed. Once developed, the processes and policies should be approved by the local school board.

Determination of Personnel Needs: Planning and Forecasting

To the extent possible, leadership as well as other positions to be filled within the schools should be known well in advance of the actual vacancy. This means that the school district must consider future program needs and systematically monitor student population shifts, retirements, resignations, transfer requests, and terminations to be aware of expected vacancies and the need to create or eliminate leadership positions. Normally, these functions should be carried out in the district's office of human resource management or by the individual designated to fulfill this function. In the human resource management office, accurate personnel records must be maintained and monitored, student enrollment projections systematically made, and procedures for early notification of intent to resign, transfer or retire should be clearly understood and observed. The fundamental goal of the determination of personnel needs in the model proposed is to have in place procedures which will inform the school district with some degree of accuracy where vacancies will occur with sufficient time then available to carefully recruit and select individuals to fill such vacancies.

Allocation of Financial and Human Resources

An effective recruitment and selection process is dependent to a large extent on the financial and human resources allocated to it. Funds must be available for advertising vacancies, postage, telephone communication, printing and xeroxing, typing, travel for final candidates, site visits, and the like. Also, funds must be allocated for outside consultants if this is desirable. In addition, existing personnel who will become involved in the recruitment and selection process must be relieved from presently assigned duties as required. The school district must be willing to provide the time and resources necessary to ensure that the model advocated here can be completely followed.

Implementation of Recruitment Efforts

Once the preceding steps have been acted upon, the recruitment effort can begin. Although a district could decide to recruit from within, a broader recruitment effort that considers internal as well as external candidates should result in a more diverse and desirable applicant pool. Seen from this vantage point, vacancies should be widely announced over a period of at least six weeks in professional journals and publications, posted in conspicuous places within each school, at the district's personnel office, and on bulletin boards throughout the central office. In addition, position announcements can be mailed to college placement offices, professors of educational administration, and to individuals known to be outstanding and desirable candidates. Further, the announcement can be disseminated at university career days and at professional meetings. The primary aim at this step is to ensure that the recruitment net is not only widely cast, but also that a diverse and qualified (as determined by the criteria established for the position) applicant pool will be created.

Implementation of Selection Procedures

The selection of candidates should be based on job-specific criteria as previously determined and be consistent with the position description as advertised. Importantly, as earlier established, the selection committee should consist of teachers, administrative staff, students, parents, and community members all representative of the particular school for which a leader is being sought, as well as appropriate district office staff. The selection process becomes more manageable when divided into two stages: initial determination based on written materials submitted, and final determination based on face-to-face interactions and the assessment of performance.

In reviewing applicants, data from a variety of sources should be considered. There are several sources from which their data can be generated: application blanks, letters of reference, personal statements, structured interviews, and assessment centers. Although we believe that data from all of these sources ought to be considered, schools could choose to use some combination of these. It is important, however, that more than one source of information be used to assess applicants for advertised positions. Each selected source of data should be carefully weighted by the school district and included in its approved selection policies.

Initial determinations of applicants thought to possess outstanding qualities sought for the position advertised can be made through the systematic review of application blanks, letters of recommendation, personal statements, and curriculum vitae. Application blanks can be designed to elicit information desired. These have the advantage of making such data as experience and training, professional and community involvement, and appropriate legitimate personal data easier to compare across applicants. They also provide fairly straight-forward data that can be used to determine which applicants meet minimum criteria for the positions and thus are eligible for further consideration.

Letters of recommendation can be requested either by the applicant or by the district but mailed directly to the coordinator of the search or some designated person. Ideally, the district should develop a list of areas that should be addressed by the recommender. These areas might be included in a cover letter to recommenders or included in a form letter with ample space for writing.

Personal statements give the applicants an opportunity to state their vision for the advertised position and to highlight considerations they hold as important. Such statements also provide an opportunity for the selection committee to assess the applicants' written communication ability.

A curriculum vitae or resume provides additional information that might be important in assessing a candidate. Comparability across candidates may be compromised in that some resumes will be professionally prepared and thus assume a more advantageous position when viewed against those that are not.

Selection Decisions

Once the initial screening of applicants has been completed those candidates who best exemplify the qualities sought for the position should surface. Selecting the best candidate from this small pool requires the collection and consideration of additional data. At this stage data can be obtained through interviews, reference checking, and assessment center participation. In the latter case, discussions should be conducted with identified, knowledgeable individuals.

For purposes of comparison across candidates, interviews should be structured and conducted by a small group of about eight trained interviewers. These interviewers should be representative of the school-community and the district office. Interviews should be rated through the use of a systematically developed rating scheme and interview questions keyed to the specific selection criteria earlier established. At least two interviews should be conducted, a preliminary and a final.

Reference checking can be accomplished through telephone calls and visits to present and former work settings. Supervisors and others familiar with the candidate's work can be a rich source of information. College and university professors and instructors of high quality university preparation programs who are familiar with the candidate's academic work and who might be knowledgeable about his or her professional skills are additional and important references to be checked.

When used in conjunction with other sources of information, assessment centers can provide information that is quite meaningful in assisting the decision-making process. Although some questions have been raised about the independence of the factors upon which candidates are assessed, as discussed in an earlier section of this treatise, assessment centers do provide useful insights into a candidate's ability to function in certain administrative capacities.

Using data collected from multiple sources, the top candidates should be selected for final interviewing. At this stage the superintendent should be intimately involved. After carefully considering all of the data and the needs of the school as established earlier the selection should be made, the successful candidate notified and board-approved for the appointment obtained. Unsuccessful candidates should be graciously notified of the decision as quickly as possible, thanking them for their interest.

Evaluation of the Recruitment and Selection Process

The final component of the model calls for continuing review and assessment of the recruitment and selection process. Data generated through review and assessment should be used to inform and improve each component of the model as appropriate. Hence, a feedback loop to each of the components is depicted in the graphic display of the model (see Figure 1). Several basic questions must be addressed in the evaluation: Does the recruitment and selection process produce the quality of school leaders desired? Is the process cost effective? Are the benefits in terms of the quality of the individuals selected, the satisfaction of the individuals participating in the process, and the overall process itself worth the cost?

POSTLUDE

In most dimensions, the methods and devices used for recruiting and selecting principals parallel those used in the private sector for recruiting and selecting middle managers. After forecasting personnel needs, the school board and superintendent should formulate recruitment and selection policy regarding selection criteria, a focus on inside or outside applicants, procedures to be followed, the personnel to be involved, and goals for sex and ethnic group equity.

Recruitment aimed at developing a large pool of qualified applicants should include advertising in appropriate and widely read professional journals and print media, using informal networks, internal posting of positions, establishing information booths at professional association meetings, and making site visits to, and using contacts at, colleges and universities. Selection procedures should be designed to choose the most qualified person. Given well defined selection criteria, multiple data sources should be used to collect candidate information and to make the final selection. Data sources include application blanks, resumes, letters of recommendation, interviews conducted by various groups, reference checking, written and performance tests, internships, and assessment centers. The instruments and procedures used in data collection should satisfy validity and reliability standards. Whereas assessment centers are increasingly being used in the recruitment and selection process, it is necessary to determine whether the skills being assessed are independent measures or are interrelated because of assessor bias.

Women and minorities traditionally have been underrepresented in administrative positions. This condition is improving for women but not for minorities. Suggestions for increasing the presence of both groups in principalships and assistant principalships include active recruitment inside and outside the local district to establish a large applicant pool, review of recruitment and selection criteria and procedures by women and minority group members who should also be involved in the actual recruitment and selection process, aggressive recruitment for participation in district-sponsored internships and university programs of preparation for educational administration, and special workshops for women and minority groups that focus on skills, attitudes, support, and procedures for entry into administrative positions.

The importance of a well designed process for the recruitment and selection of principals has been emphasized. The following question remains, however: what constitutes a good recruitment and selection process? From the literature emerges the admonition that the process should be objective and fair, that the selection criteria should be carefully developed, that multiple indicators should be used, and that, to the extent possible, some assessment of candidates' ability should be made. The recruitment and selection conceptual model which has been presented provides a procedure for implementation of the process and a framework for conducting research in this area

Research has been conducted which provides insight into interviewing techniques, the use of letters of recommendation, application blanks, paper and pencil tests, and the use of assessment centers. Generally, with the exception of the assessment center, much of this research has been conducted outside the field of education. What is greatly needed are studies that focus on the predictive validity of various types of information and principal effectiveness. The assessment center is a step in this direction. What must be asked, however, is whether the assessment center is the most effective and efficient way of selecting school leaders. The answer to this question must await more systematic investigation of a variety of techniques being tried, for example, internships, improved university preparation programs, and techniques yet to be implemented.

While many effective school leaders have been selected in the past, it has also been the case that traditional selection procedures have produced a number of ineffective leaders. The cost, however, of continuing rather subjective selection procedures is to place in jeopardy the education of countless students. Because principals are important to the effectiveness of the schools, they must be selected with care and in the knowledge that the procedures used will optimize the probability that the best person is chosen for each position. The human cost of selecting the wrong person is too high a price to pay.

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